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SUBJECT: CHAVEZ DEMANDS OBAMA EXPLAIN DCA TO UNASUR

REF: CARACAS 1144

¶1. (SBU) Speaking in Madrid on September 11, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez repeated the suggestion, first raised by Brazilian President Da Silva at the August 28 UNASUR summit in Argentina, that President Obama publicly explain the purpose of the Defense Cooperation Agreement with Colombia. Chavez asked that Obama attend the upcoming UNASUR Summit in Quito and, "explain the idea behind the bases." Note: The GBRV has not given the Embassy either a verbal or written invitation for the President to attend. End Note.

¶2. (SBU) Over the weekend, five of Venezuela's leading dailies, including papers of record El Nacional and El Universal, carried Chavez's comments as well as those of Brazilian diplomat Celso Amorim, who claimed Obama had told him "he would discuss UNASUR with his team."

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